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Akira, 1958

# TOSHIRO MIFUNE in

# THE HIDDEN FORTS

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# AKIRA KUROSAWA

ST	AFF
Produced by Toho Co.,	Ltd Masumi Fujimoto
	Akira Kurosawa
Screenplay by	Ryuzo Kikushima
	Hideo Oguni
	Shinobu Hashimoto
	Akira Kurosawa
Directed by	Akira Kurosawa
Photographed by	Ichio Yamazaki
Art Direction by	Yoshiro Muraki
Recording by	Fumio Yanoguchi
Lighting by	Ichiro Inohara
Music by	Masaru Sato
	<b>IST</b>
Rokurota Makabe	Toshiro Mifune
Princess Yukihime	Misa Uehara
	Minoru Chiaki
Matashichi	Kamatari Fujiwara
Old general Izumi Naga	kura Takashi Shimura
	Susumu Fujita
Old woman	Eiko Miyoshi
A farmer's daughter	Toshiko Higuchi
Girl-dealer	Kichijiro Ueda

This Film was Awarded

The Silver Bear

at 9th Berlin International

Film Festival, 1959

### Introduction

In the Middle Age of Japan, when local lords fought with one another for expansion of their domains, a general of a defeated lord tries to cross the enemy land with a princess and gold.

Kurosawa filmed two other historical plays before, i.e. "Kumonosu-Jo" and "The Lower Depths", which form "Kurosawa Historical Film Series" including this "The Hidden Fortress".

The scenario of this picture was written jointly by a group of leading playwrights such as Ryuzo Kikushima, Hideo Oguni, Shinobu Hashimoto and Kurosawa himself. Also, Kurosawa acted as an associate producer for this picture, which has a gorgeous cast of top-grade players of international fame on stage and screen: Toshiro Mifune, Minoru Chiaki, Kamatari Fujiwara as the three main characters, with Susumu Fujita, Takashi Shimura, Eiko Miyoshi, Koji Mitsui, Kichijiro Ueda, Mitsuru Sato, Hiroshi Fujiki, Toranosuke Ogawa and many others, among whom two debutantes of Kurosawa's discovery, Misa Uehara and Toshiko Higuchi, show their fresh and impressive play in this picture.

The production-staffs of this picture consist of those elite-experts: Camera by Ichio Yamazaki, the Photographing Prize winner at the Asian Film Festival, 1958: art direction by Yoshiro Muraki who won the "Blue Ribbon Prize" and the "Mainichi Film Prize" 1958: recording by Fumio Yanoguchi; lighting by Ichiro Inohara; and music by Masaru Sato.

# "I made a 100% Amusement Film"

(A short interview with Kurosawa)

Three years of deliberate preparations after it was planned, "The Hidden Fortress" was cranked in on May 28th, 1958, under the direction of Kurosawa.

This picture forms with his other two pictures, i.e. "Kumonosu-Jo" and "The Lower Depths", Kurosawa's ambitious work of "Historical Film Series", but this picture is said to prevail in its scale over "Kumonosu-Jo" and in its thrill and fun over "The Lower Depths."

This is a short interview with Kurosawa when he started for the eight-

month location for "The Hidden Fortress."

Question: What is the plot of this picture?

Kurosawa: The story about a general of a defeated lord. He crosses a long way from a hidden fort through enemies, accompanied by his lord's heiress and with a good amount of gold. No difficult theories, only I want to make a 100% Amusement Film with thrills and fun. The scenario of this picture was written on this production and is based on the fact that there was a hidden fort in Yamanashi Prefecture. I heard it from Mr. Kikushima who comes from that district and who wrote this scenario with us. The structure of the story was decided like this: Every morning I made out a situation which allowed no escaping for the general and the princess. Then other three writers (Ryuzo Kiku-

shima, Shinobu Hashimoto and Hideo Oguni) made desperate efforts to escape that situation for them. ... In this way the scenario was accumulated day by day. For my part, I would like to make an invigorating historical spectacle out of this picture.

Question: Something about making your first wide-production, please.

Kurosawa: I have been feeling the standard-screen a little too narrow from the viewpoint of composition in my way of filming. I find the wide-screen rather easier for me, so that there will be no difficulty, I hope.

Question: Why don't you make a color picture?

Kurosawa: I am not yet contented with the color of Japanese pictures, and color pictures are apt to have a shallower focal-depth so that they do not suit my direction. Also because color negative is too expensive to use enough lengths.

Question: About your new discovery of Miss Uehara...

Kurosawa: The most difficult role of this picture is played by Miss Uehara, as a spirited princess. She must whip Mr. Misune, a veteran star of international same, in her first film, and she must realize the unique character of a princess who has been brought up like a man. This is a hard problem for me, too.

Anyway, the has been training in horse-riding as well as in acting led by Miss Eight Missibiliand I am pretty sure that she will do well in



# "HIDDEN FORTRESS"

VALLEY TIMES: "Toshiro Mifune, the intense young star from Tokyo, Japan, will win new acclaim for his latest picture, 'Hidden Fortress', . . . it will surely provide an evening of excitement and suspense."

By Vaughn Proctor

Los Angeles Examiner: "... a jim-dandy surprise package in store for you... An action thriller, loaded all the way with excitement and suspense!"

By Kay Proctor